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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/565,853	01/26/2006	Yukitaka Shimizu	19070230PUS1	8106
2292	7590	12/24/2008	EXAMINER	
BIRCH STEWART KOLASCH & BIRCH PO BOX 747 FALLS CHURCH, VA 22040-0747				MUHAMMAD, KHALIF R
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3685				
NOTIFICATION DATE			DELIVERY MODE	
12/24/2008			ELECTRONIC	

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

mailroom@bskb.com

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/565,853	SHIMIZU ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	KHALIF MUHAMMAD	3685	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 28 August 2008.
 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 14, 16, 17, 20-23, 26, 27, 29 and 30 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 14, 16, 17, 20-23, 26, 27, 29 and 30 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)	4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)	Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>01/08/2007; 01/26/2006</u> .	5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application
	6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ .

DETAILED ACTION

Status of Claims

1. Claims 14,16,17,20-23,26,27,29 and 30 have been examined and rejected

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

2. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

3. Claims 14,16,17,20-23,26,27,29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

For example Claim 14 are directed to a “accounting system”. Specifically, Claim 14 recites a license server, an accounting server and a content reproduction device being connected through communication network. However, it cannot be classified as a process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter is considered to be non-statutory under 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claim 16 is also rejected as it recites similar language to claim 14 and claims 17,20-23,26,27,29 and 30 are also rejected as each claim depends from either claim 14 or 16.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 14,16, 20,22,23 and 26 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

6. The claims are generally narrative and indefinite, failing to conform with current U.S. practice. They appear to be a literal translation into English from a foreign document and are replete with grammatical and idiomatic errors.

7. With respect to claims 14 a single claim which purports to be both a product or machine and a process is ambiguous and is properly rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention.

(Ex Parte Lyell, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (B.P.A.I. 1990))

8. With respect to claims 14 and 16 applicant recites "and performs decoding and reproduction with the stored decoding information each time the encrypted content is decoded". However, it is unclear to one of ordinary skill why the content requires "decoding" after it has already been decoded (the encrypted content is decoded"). For purposes of examination, decoding will be understood to mean decrypting.

9. With respect to claim 16, applicant recited "...wherein when the license vending machine reads a license card and decoding information does not exist for a content ID identifying an encrypted content..." the scope of this claim is unclear and an essential

purpose of patent examination is to fashion claims that are precise, clear, correct, and unambiguous. Only in this way can uncertainties of claim scope be removed... (*In re Zletz, 13 USPQ2d 1320 (Fed. Cir. 1989)*)

10. With respect to claims 20,22, and 23, the applicant recites an apparatus in claim 14 however claims 20,22 and 23 depend from claim 14 and recite method steps (i.e. “...exchange of data...” “...records a content ID....” “...records the number...”). It has been held that a single claim which purports to be both a product or machine and a process is ambiguous and is properly rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the invention. (*Ex Parte Lyell, 17 USPQ2d 1548 (B.P.A.I. 1990)*)

11. With respect to claim 26, applicant recites “a program operable to drive a computer to execute...” This is understood to imply software , however the scope unclear because claim 14 is an apparatus. An essential purpose of patent examination is to fashion claims that are precise, clear, correct, and unambiguous. Only in this way can uncertainties of claim scope be removed... (*In re Zletz, 13 USPQ2d 1320 (Fed. Cir. 1989)*).

12. With respect to claim 26, applicant recites “...to execute a function....” However it is unclear what a “function” exactly is. This claim is indefinite and for purposes of examination will be understood to mean anything that that accounting system can perform.

13. With respect to claim 27 applicant recite “... the program defined in claim 26...”

This claim is indefinite due to fact the program defined in claim 26 is unclear. An essential purpose of patent examination is to fashion claims that are precise, clear, correct, and unambiguous. Only in this way can uncertainties of claim scope be removed. (*In re Zletz, 13 USPQ2d 1320 (Fed. Cir. 1989)*)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

14. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

15. Claims 14,16,17,20-23,26,27,29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishiguro (US 7,216,368).

16. With respect to claims 14, 26, and 27, Ishiguro discloses an accounting system,

- wherein a license server, an accounting server and a content reproduction device are connected through communication network, (fig 1; col 7 lines 1-3)
- transmits a content ID identifying an encrypted content and the accounting ID to obtain and store decoding information from the license server, (col 7 lines 50-60)
- and performs decoding and reproduction with the stored decoding information each time the encrypted content is decoded, (fig. 10 col 7 lines 12-20)

Ishiguro does not specifically disclose wherein the content reproduction device reads out an accounting ID identifying money information from a prepaid card, however Ishiguro discloses a user inputting personal information as well as accounting information into the input unit. It would be a predictable result of the invention to use a "prepaid card" in order to input payment information as a quicker and more effective method. (*Ex parte Smith*, 83 USPQ2d 1509 (Bd. Pat. App. & Int. 2007)

Ishiguro does not specifically recite wherein the license server transmits an accounting amount obtained from the received content ID and the accounting ID to obtain an accounting result from the accounting server and returns to the content reproduction device decoding information corresponding to the content ID if the accounting result is the success of the accounting, and wherein if money information corresponding to the received accounting ID is larger than the received accounting amount, the accounting server subtracts the accounting amount from the money information and returns the success of the accounting. However it has been held that actions that may or may not be done are indefinite and does not distinguish the claim from the prior art. (*In re Collier*, 158 USPQ 266 (CCPA 1968))

17. With respect to claim 16, Ishiguro discloses an accounting system comprising
 - a content reproduction device, a license server, an accounting server and a license vending machine, wherein the license server, the accounting server and

the license vending machine are connected through communication network, (fig 1; col 7 lines 1-3)

- transmits the content ID and the accounting ID to obtain decoding information from the license server and records the decoding information correspondingly to the content ID into the license card,(figs7 and 10; abstract; col 8 lines 43-46;)
- wherein the content reproduction device reads the license card, obtains and stores decoding information corresponding to a content ID identifying an encrypted content (col 7 lines 12-19)
- and performs decoding and reproduction with the stored decoding information each time the encrypted content is decoded, (col 7 lines 12-19)

Ishiguro does not specifically disclose **wherein when the license vending machine reads a license card and decoding information does not exist for a content ID identifying an encrypted content, the license vending machine reads out an accounting ID identifying money information and the content ID from the license card**, however Ishiguro discloses inputting information by keyboard (col 19 lines 34-40) as well as recording user information to a storage medium (col 19 lines 55-67) and it would have been a predictable result of the invention to store or backup the needed information in the input device or storage medium in case it was not available on the machine. (*Ex parte Smith, 83 USPQ2d 1509 (Bd. Pat. App. & Int. 2007)*)

Ishiguro does not specifically recite wherein the license server transmits an accounting amount obtained from the received content ID and the accounting ID to obtain an

accounting result from the accounting server and returns to the content reproduction device decoding information corresponding to the content ID if the accounting result is the success of the accounting, and wherein if money information corresponding to the received accounting ID is larger than the received accounting amount, the accounting server subtracts the accounting amount from the money information and returns the success of the accounting. However it has been held that actions that may or may not be done are indefinite and does not distinguish the claim from the prior art. (*In re Collier*, 158 USPQ 266 (CCPA 1968))

18. With respect to claim 17, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 16, but does not specifically disclose wherein when a content ID of an encrypted content to be reproduced does not exist in the license card, the content reproduction device records the content ID into the license card. However Ishiguro does disclose user information being recorded on an appropriate storage medium(column 19 lines 55-60) and additionally it has been held that actions that may or may not be done are indefinite and does not distinguish the claim from the prior art. (*In re Collier*, 158 USPQ 266 (CCPA 1968))

19. With respect to claim 20, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 14, wherein the exchange of data through the communication network is performed with encryption. (col 2 lines 1-10)

20. With respect to claim 21, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 14, wherein the accounting ID and/or the decoding information are provided with an expiration date. (fig 8. col 9 lines 40-52)

21. With respect to claim 22, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 14, wherein the license server records a content ID of a content used for each accounting ID as a usage history. (col 11 lines 5-15; col 24 lines 47-51)

22. With respect to claim 23, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 22, wherein the license server records the number of times of usage for each content ID as a usage history. (col 11 lines 5-15; col 24 lines 47-51)

23. With respect to claim 29, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 16, wherein the exchange of data through the communication network is performed with encryption. (col 2 lines 1-10)

24. With respect to claim 30, Ishiguro discloses the accounting system of claim 17, wherein the exchange of data through the communication network is performed with encryption. (col 2 lines 1-10)

Conclusion

25. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to KHALIF MUHAMMAD whose telephone number is (571)270-5207. The examiner can normally be reached on 5/4/9.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hewitt Calvin can be reached on 571-272-6709. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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/KHALIF MUHAMMAD/
Examiner, Art Unit 3685

/Calvin L Hewitt II/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3685